

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LENDING 00956 270836Z

61

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMCONSUL Leningrad

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1353

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INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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TAGS: TBIO UR

SUBJ: SOVIETS OPERATE SUCCESSFULLY ON YOUNG AMERICAN "HOPELESS
CASE"

USIA FOR IEE, IBS

1. DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY WILL HAVE HEARD OR WILL BE HEARING
VIA TASS AND POSSIBLE CBS TV COVERAGE OF MEDICAL TRIUMPH
BEING CLAIMED BY Leningrad POLENOV NEUROSURGICAL INSTITUTE
IN THE CASE OF 19 YEAR OLD ROGER FRANK, WHO ARRIVED IN THE
USSR IN FEBRUARY, 1975 ALMOST COMPLETELY PARALYZED FROM THE
NECK DOWN AS A RESULT OF SPINAL CORD DAMAGE, AND WHOSE CASE,
ACCORDING TO HIS PARENTS, HELEN AND LEONARD FRANK, HAD BEEN
PRONOUNCED HOPELESS IN THE U.S. FOLLOWING OPERATION AT
INSTITUTE YOUNG FRANK HAS RECOVERED FEELING IN LIMBS AND
CAN HOLD AND USE WRITING INSTRUMENTS. SOVIET PROGNOSIS IS
FOR CONTINUING RECOVERY.

2. Leningrad KOMSOMOL DAILY SMENA REPORTS IN SELF-
CONGRATULATORY HALF PAGE STORY ON JUNE 25 THAT THE OPERATION
WOULD BE POSSIBLE IN THE WEST, BUT WESTERN PHYSICIANS
WOULD NOT TAKE IT ON BECAUSE UNSUCCESSFUL OPERATION CAN
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HAVE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THE SURGEON'S REPUTATION AND

HENCE HIS REVENUE. IN INTERVIEW, LEONARD FRANK REPORTS ASTRONOMICAL COSTS OF HOSPITALIZATION IN U.S. ONLY PARTIALLY COVERED BY INSURANCE, AND ALL FAMILY MEMBERS EXPRESS ENORMOUS GRATITUDE TO SOVIET PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT.

3. ASIDE FROM SELF-CONGRATULATORY SNIPING, ARTICLE PRESENTS FRANKS AS WARM HUMAN BEINGS AND IS GENERALLY POSITIVE PEOPLE TO PEOPLE APPROACH. ARTICLE IS OF SOME LOCAL INTEREST AS) IT IS RARE EXAMPLE OF FOREIGN ASSOCIATED REPORTING GENERATED BY PAPER ITSELF RATHER THAN TASS, SMENA HAVING COME TO KNOW OF FRANK CASE THROUGH CONTACT WITH CONGEN P&C LOCAL; B) INSTITUTE DIRECTOR, FEARFUL OF BEING SWAMPED WITH HOPELESS CASE REQUESTS WANTED STORY KILLED BUT WAS OVERRULED BY OBKOM PROPAGANDA CHIEF; AND C) STORY HAS GIVEN CONGEN ACCESS TO SMENA DEPUTY EDITOR IN CHIEF, V.. NEDOSHIVIN, SCHEDULED VISIT US IN AUTUMN WITH KOMSOMOL JOURNALISTS GROUP.

4. POST POUCHING ARTICLE TO USIA/IBS FOR POSSIBLE RUSSIAN-SERVICE USE, PERHAPS COUPLED WITH EXAMPLES OF U.S. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO SOVIETS.

NEUBERT

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